

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1 and 3-6 have been amended and claims 7-13 have been added as follows:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): An electrolyte membrane comprising a porous substrate and an electrolyte polymer, the electrolyte membrane being formed by filling the pores of the porous substrate with the electrolyte polymer, and the ~~porous substrate~~ electrolyte membrane having a ratio of the maximum value to the minimum value (maximum value / minimum value) of the ionic conductivity measured in a plane direction of no greater than 1.5.

Claim 2 (original): The electrolyte membrane according to Claim 1, wherein the porous substrate is produced via a drawing step, and the ratio of the maximum value to the minimum value (maximum value / minimum value) of the amount of drawing within the plane is no greater than 2.5.

Claim 3 (currently amended): The electrolyte membrane according to ~~either~~ Claim 1 ~~[[or 2]]~~, wherein the porous substrate is produced via a biaxial drawing step.

Claim 4 (currently amended): The electrolyte membrane according to ~~any one of Claims 1 to 3~~ Claim 1, wherein the porous substrate comprises a polyolefin or a crosslinked polyolefin.

Claim 5 (currently amended): ~~The polymer electrolyte membrane according to any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein the polymer electrolyte membrane is obtained by impregnating the porous substrate with an electrolyte monomer, or a monomer that can be converted into a group that can function as an electrolyte after polymerization, or a solution or dispersion containing the above, and~~

~~then polymerizing the monomer~~ The electrolyte membrane according to Claim 1, wherein the porous substrate comprises a drawn polyethylene.

Claim 6 (currently amended): ~~A fuel cell that incorporates the electrolyte membrane according to any one of Claims 1 to 5~~ The electrolyte membrane according to Claim 1, wherein a thickness of the porous substrate is no greater than 200 μm .

Claim 7 (new): The electrolyte membrane according to Claim 1, wherein the electrolyte polymer has an ion-exchange group.

Claim 8 (new): The electrolyte membrane according to Claim 1, wherein the electrolyte polymer has a sulfonic acid group or a phosphoric acid group.

Claim 9 (new): The electrolyte membrane according to Claim 1, wherein the electrolyte membrane is obtained by impregnating the porous substrate with an electrolyte monomer, or a monomer that can be converted into a group that can function as an electrolyte after polymerization, or a solution or dispersion containing the above, and then polymerizing the monomer.

Claim 10 (new): The electrolyte membrane according to Claim 9, wherein the monomer contains a sulfonic acid group-containing vinyl compound or a phosphoric acid group-containing vinyl compound.

Claim 11 (new): The electrolyte membrane according to Claim 9, wherein the monomer contains 2-acrylamido-2-methylpropanesulfonic acid.

Claim 12 (new): A fuel cell that incorporates the electrolyte membrane according to Claim 1.

• **Hideaki HIRAOKA, et al.**

(§371 of International Application PCT/JP05/04599)

•
Claim 13 (new): The fuel cell according to Claim 12, wherein the fuel cell is a direct methanol fuel cell.